

TEXTUAL FUNCTION IN THE JAKARTA POST EDITORIALS

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with Theme and Rheme in Editorials texts of The Jakarta Post newspaper. The aims are to find out the optional element dominates the structure of theme in the editorials of The Jakarta Post newspaper and to describe where the optional dominant element occurs. The research was conducted by using descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected from three different editions of The Jakarta Post editorials which is published on January 2014. The findings indicate that conjunction was an element dominantly used in textual theme because there were so many compound clauses and there were two or more clauses in coordination relation or dependency on another. In interpersonal theme, adjunct was an element dominantly used that means that a prepositional phrase has its own internal structure containing complement within it and preposition is put at first position of a clause which is called Theme. Conjunction and adjunct were dominantly used when the editors tell their argumentation, comment and their assessment of the news, because of the using of colloquialism or spoken language in editorials of the Jakarta Post newspaper.

Keyword : *Theme, Rheme, Editorial*

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INTRODUCTION

Theme is the element that serves as the starting point for the message that is what the clause is going to be about. Rheme is defined as the rest of the clause in which the theme is developed. Rheme can be simply found in a clause by identifying parts of the clause which do not belong to Theme. This organization depends on the context of using language that is purpose of the text. In Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) One of the main assumptions of SFL is that language serves three main purposes: the experiential (or ideational), through which language users express their view of the world; the interpersonal, through which language users establish and maintain social contact; and the textual, which allows for the first two to be brought together and organized in a way that is communicatively effective.

In presenting the editorial, editors often used styles and variations of language. The style and variation of language are used to attract the reader's attention and to inform the interesting news. The writer used editorials text to analyze the ways in which reporter and editorial make choices in topical, interpersonal and textual element through theme to show the value of the linguistic theory for explain the ways in which experiential meaning is encoded along with interpersonal intent through the textual function.

In this study, the writer analyzethematic structure and their elements used in editorials of The Jakarta Post newspaper because of many readers are difficult to interpret the news that written by editors. It happened because the editors often manipulated the thematic structure which was originally intended to attract the reader's attention to read the contents of the text that written by the editor.

The research questions of the present study are: what optional element dominates the structure of Theme in the editorials of *The Jakarta Post* newspaper and in what context does the dominant element occurs?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Metafunctions

Halliday (1994:368) states that ways in which human beings use language classified into three broad categories: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Each of the three metafunctions is about a different aspect of the world, and is concerned with a different mode of meaning of clauses. The ideational metafunction is about the natural world in the broadest sense, including our own consciousness, and is concerned with clauses as representations. The interpersonal metafunction is about the social world, especially the relationship between speaker and hearer, and is concerned with clauses as exchanges. The textual metafunction is about the verbal world, especially the flow of information in a text, and is concerned with clauses as messages.

a. Theme and Rheme

Halliday (1994: 38) characterizes Theme as ‘what message is concerned with or the point of departure for what the speaker is going to say’. It is what the clause is going to be about’. Rheme is defined as the rest of the clause in which the theme is developed. Rheme contains new information. Rheme can be explained as being the rest of the message (Bloor and Bloor 1995:72). Theme and rheme work together as a message of structure in a text as conveyer information to the listener. A clause consists of theme and rheme. Theme is known by its position is the initial element of a clause, whereas the rheme is formed by all the other constituents which follow. The position of the theme is in the beginning of the clause and the rheme is the rest.

b. Characteristic of theme

According to Halliday (1994:38) theme is one element in a particular structural configuration which, taken as a whole, organize the clause as a message. A message consists of a theme combined with a rheme. The theme is the starting point for the message. First position in the clause is not what defines the Theme; it is the means whereby the function of theme is realized. There is no automatic reason why the theme function should realize in this way. But if any given language the message is organized as Theme-Rheme structure, and if this structure is expressed by sequence in which the

elements occur in the clause, then it seems natural that the position for the theme should be at the beginning, rather than at the end or at some other specific point. The Theme is not necessarily a nominal group; it may also be an adverbial group or portioned phrase.

c. Marked and Unmarked Theme

According to (Saragih 2013:49) the theme may be unmarked and marked. An unmarked theme is one which carries a common or usual way of conveying message in a clause. On the contrary a marked theme conveys message in a clause not in a common way. In everyday communication, the item most often function as Unmarked Theme or subject theme such as *personal pronoun* (I, you, we, they, she, he, it) *impersonal pronoun* (it, there) and nominal groups. On the other side, the most usual Marked theme is an *adverbialgroup* (today, suddenly); *prepositional phrase* (at night, in the corner) or it can be an *adjunct* in the clause.

d. Types of theme

1. Topical theme

The ideational stage to the theme is known as topical theme, means that the participant in thematic function corresponds fairly closely to the topic in a topic-comment. The theme extends from the beginning of the clause up to (and including) the first element that has a function in transitivity. The theme always contains one, and only one, of the experiential elements, means that the theme of a clause ends with the first constituent that is in participant, circumstance, or process.

2. Interpersonal theme

Interpersonal Theme covers one or more elements of:

- a) The Finite, which is typically realized by an auxiliary verb. Its presence in thematic position signals that a response is expected indicates that a response is expected from the addressee.
- b) A Wh- element, which is signaling that an answer is required from the addressee. Wh- element include the question words such as where, when, what, why, which, whose, how.
- c) A Vocative, which is indicated the name of a person of whom information is asked. Vocative also identify the addressee in the exchange.

- d) An Adjunct, typically realized by an adverb which may provide the speaker's comment, assessment, or attitude towards the message.

3. *Textual theme*

Textual theme almost always constitutes the first part of the Theme, coming before any interpersonal themes. The element of textual theme includes conjunction, relatives, conjunctives and continuatives.

- a) Conjunctions, link two clauses in a coordination relation or dependency on another. Conjunction such as and, but, so, whether, when, while, etc.
- b) Relatives, relate a dependent clause to another clause.
- c) Conjunctives provide a cohesive link back to the previous discourse.
- d) Continuatives indicate a relationship to previous discourse. It signals that a new move is beginning such as well, oh, right, of course, anyway, etc.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative because the result of this study is intended to describe the use of thematic structure and their element in editorials of *The Jakarta Post* newspaper. Thus, by using qualitative research, it will give the facts by correct interpretation to describe the character of *The Jakarta Post* based on the thematic structure and their element that is The Jakarta Post editorials.

The data of this study were collected by doing documentary technique categorizing the elements of theme, counting the optional dominant element of theme and describing in what context the optional dominant element used in editorial of The Jakarta Post newspaper.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. *Theme in The Jakarta Post editorials (Unmarked and Marked Theme)*

In this research, marked theme was dominant than others because most of clauses are not based on good structures and the first position of clauses is not begun by actor or subject, but it is begin by conjunctions, relatives, or adjuncts. In written

language, Unmarked is used but in the editorial of *The Jakarta Post* found that Marked Theme was dominantly used. It shows that the context is written but it uses spoken mode.

2. Multiple Themes in *The Jakarta Post* editorials

In Multiple Themes of Thematic Structures, Topical Themes was dominant than others. It means that the Theme of a clause extends up to the first element that has some experiential function in the clause. Hence in a dependent clause expresses the nature of clause's relation to some other clauses in the neighborhood and the part has a function both in transitivity (as Actor) and in Mood (as Subject).

In Textual Themes, there are four elements namely, Structural conjunctions, relatives, conjunctives and continuatives. Structural Conjunctions were dominantly used than others. It means that there are many compound clauses and there are two or more clauses in coordination relations or dependency on another. Its function was to relate the clause to a preceding clause in the same sentence (clause complex in one sentence). It means that in the editorial of *The Jakarta Post*, there are many complex themes which relate one clause to another so that the information which is given so clearly although it is so difficult to understand without learning the grammars. The first position of clause begins with a structural conjunction or more then the next position is an actor or a subject. Sometimes, there is no actor or subject in the clause because it has been written in the first clause.

In Interpersonal Themes, there are four elements, such as Finite, WH-Elements, Vocative, and adjuncts. In this research, it has been found that adjunct was dominantly used in *The Jakarta Post* editorials. It means that a prepositional phrase has its own internal structure, containing Complement within it and preposition is put at first position of a clause which is called Theme. Generally all Halliday's theories about Textual Function in a text applied in *The Jakarta Post* editorials.

Discussion

In written language, unmarked theme is used but in the editorial of *The Jakarta Post* found that Marked Theme is dominantly used. It shows that the context is written but it uses spoken mode. Two elements of interpersonal in Thematic Structures are

Finite, WH-elements rarely used in the editorial of *The Jakarta Post* because WH-elements and Finite function to ask a question that used in interactive communication or in casual interaction. Meanwhile in the editorial of *The Jakarta Post* the writer writing the news related with what is happening in real life situation. The real life situation indicates how language is used in interaction or spoken manner. The journalist realizes the real life situation specifically the spoken language as used by the speaker. The journalists represent the use of natural language as made by the news source. As the news sources are alive and is natural setting, the use of spoken natural are reflected in the text.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

After analyzing the data, it can be concluded that the most dominant element dominates the structure of theme in the editorials of the Jakarta Post was conjunction in textual theme and adjunct in interpersonal theme. Conjunction in textual theme and adjunct in interpersonal theme was dominantly used when the editors tells their argumentation, comment and their assessment of the news. It's because of the using of colloquialism or spoken language in editorial of The Jakarta Post newspaper.

Suggestions

With reference to the conclusions, there are some suggestions needed to be considered. This research can be used to fulfill a better understanding for the readers of The Jakarta Post editorial. The researcher suggests the reader to use theme and rheme to analyze sentences so the reader can get the main point of the information in a text. The students who concern with this study need to make detailed analysis about thematic structure in any kinds of text and it is suggested for the editorial writer to propose a balance argumentation to certain a social issue.

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